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President: Ms. Mejía Vélez (Vice-President) ..... (Colombia)

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In the absence of Mr. Sajdik (Austria), Ms. Mejía Vélez (Colombia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system (session I) (*continued*)

Panel discussion 2: "Longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system taking into account the post-2015 development agenda: How can the United Nations system address these issues and become more effective, efficient and impactful?"

1. **Ms. Mohammed** (Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning) said that 2015 offered an unprecedented opportunity to bring together the countries and peoples of the world to decide on new ways forward to meet the challenges of sustainable development and climate change. In December 2014, the Secretary-General had launched his synthesis report on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda (A/69/700), which identified six elements to help frame and reinforce the sustainable development agenda, namely people, dignity, the planet, prosperity, partnerships and justice.

2. The changing development landscape and the new sustainable development agenda would require an international community that was fit for purpose to support countries in their implementation of a new generation of sustainable development goals. The transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) would have to be managed over time in order to allow countries to embrace a broader and deeper sustainable development remit. In addition to the opportunities and challenges that the implementation of the new universal and integrated development agenda would present, there would be institutional, financial and governance implications for the United Nations system. After many decades of discussing sustainable development, Member States had taken ownership of the concept and were the driving force behind the selection of priorities for the new agenda. It was now time to consider the specifics of how each country would implement that agenda nationwide.

3. In order for the United Nations system to be fit for purpose to deliver on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, it must be relevant, innovative and agile. It must be guided by universal human rights and international norms, integrate the United Nations normative frameworks with its operational activities and be responsive to the differentiated needs of countries. It must provide specialized advice when requested, and ensure an integrated approach, working across disciplines with relevant skill sets to better support Member States in addressing complex challenges. The system must forge effective partnerships to leverage the expertise, capacities and resources of external partners. Given the breadth and depth of the new development agenda, its success would require the mobilization of new actors.

4. The United Nations system was committed to working more collaboratively to leverage the expertise and capacities of all its organizations in support of sustainable development. At the country level, United Nations country teams would provide coherent support to national stakeholders to implement their new post-2015 development strategies, while accelerating implementation of the standard operating procedures for delivering as one in order to achieve greater results for sustainable development. A coherent approach did not mean that national mandates and capacities would be assimilated into the United Nations system or vice versa; there was strength in diversity and in identifying different priorities in the face of various challenges.

5. Several United Nations agencies had already taken steps to improve their effectiveness and efficiency; however more needed to be done if the United Nations system was to lead on the sustainable development agenda. The United Nations would collectively and strategically have to embrace the new parameters and transformative elements of the future framework. The leadership of the High-level Committee on Programmes, the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) had been instrumental in identifying how the United Nations system could be made fit for purpose and shaping the vision for the agenda. Discussions were ongoing and could certainly benefit from further input. The Organization still faced major challenges, particularly with regard to communicating the symbiotic relationship of climate change and development. The 17 goals proposed in the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals clearly indicated that tackling climate change and fostering sustainable development agendas were two mutually reinforcing sides of the same coin, particularly at the national level.

6. The dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system must go beyond considering how the system could become fit for purpose and help countries to deliver better; it must also examine the interlinkages between its functions, funding practices, governance structures, capacity and impact, partnership approaches and organizational arrangements. The strength of the three pillars of the United Nations, namely peace and security, human rights and development, as the foundations of the agenda, would also be critical. The capacity and resources of the Organization were being stretched by the needs of various countries and regions where those pillars were shaky. As the discussions surrounding the funding implications and resource requirements of the new, universal agenda progressed, it would be important to ensure that investor incentives were aligned with the development goals. The Organization must invest in an enhanced system-wide culture of collaboration, collective accountability and shared responsibility, focused on results and their impact at the national level.

7. It was time for global action. The prospect of finalizing the MDGs and engaging with the new agenda had mobilized the international community and provided an opportunity to address issues and challenges relating to the data revolution, regional review mechanisms and development of a global set of indicators. Three major summits would be held in 2015 to address sustainable development, climate change and financing for development, creating numerous opportunities to take action. While the Organization had substantial experience in tackling those issues, it would now need to scale up its operations. Member States' comments would inform intergovernmental negotiations and internal discussions within the United Nations system to ensure that the Organization could deliver at the national level.

8. **Mr. Thomson** (Observer for Fiji), President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), panellist, said that, as the preparatory work for the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda was well under way, the main focus of the current discussion must be on the implementation of the new agenda and on ensuring that the United Nations system would be fit for purpose to address that massive 15-year task. It was particularly important to countries such as Fiji, a small Pacific island in a region where many people risked losing their homes to rising sea levels, that development should be sustainable; otherwise all the talk about development would be just empty words.

9. If a parallel were to be drawn between the United Nations and a private company, the Member States and their citizens would be the Organization's shareholders; the Permanent Representatives and the staff of the Permanent Missions would be its board of directors, and the Secretariat would be its management, employed by the Member States. The shareholders, directors and management all had to work effectively in order for the Organization to achieve its goals; however it was particularly important that the directors were actively engaged in the entire structure, providing oversight and guidance to the management. The executive boards, Chairs and bureaus of United Nations bodies must therefore hold regular meetings with the Secretariat in order to exercise their oversight diligently. There should also be more continuity in addressing the issues identified. The Organization did not exist for the sake of the Secretariat or the diplomats, it existed for the Member States. The development system and the post-2015 development agenda could go some way to improving the mixed global opinion of the work of the United Nations system.

10. On 16 July 2014, the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS had sent a letter to the Secretary-General, outlining suggestions to reform and revitalize the work of the executive boards throughout the United Nations system. No response had been received to date. The letter, though somewhat critical of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), had highlighted the great importance attached to the country-level services of United Nations funds and programmes by the great majority of Member States, even though the United Nations was not a major source of development funding. The intrinsic value of the United Nations in-country presence lay in the Organization's reputation for best practice. However, the lack of coherence within and between United Nations funds and programmes undermined that advantage. In particular, small island developing States were a microcosm that exposed the deficiencies of the silo approach adopted by United Nations system entities. While some entities had done

their utmost to adopt the "Delivering as one" approach, the general trend was to reward loyalty to the brands and goals of the individual funds and programmes. Thought was required as to how to reverse that trend. Many field officers blamed the lack of coherence on United Nations Headquarters, where there were examples of many of the syndromes common to large bureaucracies, namely turf wars, empire building, anachronistic entitlements and service duplication. The difficulties encountered in implementing the "Delivering as one" approach in the field were thus hardly surprising. The executive boards of all United Nations funds and programmes must deliver as one in order to ensure coherence, in accordance with the mandates of the General Assembly. The Secretary-General might wish to convene a special meeting to explore possible solutions.

11. The letter had also highlighted the profligacy with which the United Nations was wasting Member States' money in the area of procurement. It was common to hear the senior managers of United Nations funds and programmes say that they were in fierce competition with each other for funding. That competitive mentality was fundamentally wrong and directly contributed to competition in the field between the various United Nations entities, as could be seen very clearly in the small island developing States. Mission creep arose as a result, leading to duplication of work and leaving the population confused about where to go for particular services. Decisions on funding should be made by Member States, with the services tailored accordingly by the funds and programmes. Such entities should be judged by their delivery on their mandate, not by their success in lobbying for more funds. It was estimated that rationalizing the United Nations procurement system could potentially save the Organization 10 per cent of its annual procurement spending, a considerable amount at a time of funding constraints.

12. **Mr. Wennubst** (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation), panellist, accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, said that, as a pragmatic dreamer, he hoped that within a generation everyone would be living a dignified life. As part of the research that he had carried out in 2013 in collaboration with the German Development Institute, on the possible implications of the implementation of the 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system in connection with the post-2015 development agenda, it had become apparent that some issues could not be solved at the national or local level, which highlighted the importance of the United Nations. However, in order to strengthen its legitimacy, the Organization needed a clear and universally valid mandate for the implementation of the post-2015 agenda.

13. Data was one example of an area in which coordination at the international level was needed. The United Nations must therefore provide countries and regions with strategic support to define their own regulatory and operational frameworks in order to set the baseline data for the implementation of the sustainable development goals. The United Nations must also calculate the overall means of implementation needed for the data revolution, and communicate that to the world's citizens. Many people had a relatively bad impression of how the United Nations system performed, so the Organization must convince them of the need to provide funding beyond assessed contributions. That would help free the United Nations to focus on its mandate.

14. A quiet revolution was needed to reform the United Nations development system. At the 2015 summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, Heads of State should clearly indicate the areas in which the United Nations should take a lead. Existing structures and systems needed to be amended, but could continue to be used in the meantime; it was not always necessary to start from scratch. The General Assembly should also adopt a new quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution in 2016 to define how the United Nations development system needed to evolve in order to fulfil its mandate.

15. CEB must evolve into a managerial entity, with the current Development Operations Coordination Office as its operational arm, and should define a binding system-wide strategy to be presented to and approved by the Council. In order to translate that strategy into national programmes, a new generation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) should be developed. The United Nations resident coordinators and country teams could then elaborate the Organization's strategy to implement system-wide mandates in specific areas, based on the specialized knowledge and skills of each agency. Financial requirements should be aggregated and prioritized. A global funding mechanism, based on innovative sources of finance, would allow the

Organization's system-wide mandates to be implemented at both global and country levels. The high-level political forum on sustainable development would review implementation at country level, as well as the contribution of the United Nations. It was likely to take between 8 and 12 years to implement the necessary changes.

16. In a world where instability, fear and mistrust were growing, it was more important than ever for the United Nations to embrace the core values of multilateralism. Although the Organization's legitimacy was anchored in the Charter, it was being challenged by the difficulties the system faced in adapting its responses to rapidly evolving contexts. The United Nations should be given a certain amount of independence, particularly with regard to funding, in order to tackle supranational issues. A system-wide funding mechanism that went beyond assessed contributions and earmarked funds would help to guarantee that independence. However, to ensure ownership and mutual responsibility, global citizens must be convinced of the Organization's ability to deliver on its mandate, as clearly defined by Heads of States when they adopted the new sustainable development agenda.

17. Instead of calling for the operational system to be completely reshaped, entities should accept the fact that the United Nations had an overarching role to play. CEB, resident coordinators and country teams should be empowered to play that role, while remaining accountable to the Council, Member States, regional organizations and citizens. In order to convince citizens and taxpayers of the need to invest in the work of the United Nations, a review mechanism should be established to focus dialogue on the results achieved and to identify the successes and challenges related to the implementation of the post-2015 agenda.

18. **Ms. Topping** (United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Mozambique), panellist, said that the question of the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system and the implications of the new sustainable development agenda were at the heart of discussions being held not only in New York, but also in countries around the world between Governments and resident coordinators, United Nations country teams and other development partners. It was at the country level where the implementation of the sustainable development agenda would become a reality and where the Organization's vision and goals could ultimately be realized. It was also where the Organization's relevance would be tested. The adoption of a new agenda offered an opportunity to take stock of changes over the last decade that had strengthened the overall relevance and impact of the United Nations development system on the ground. Stakeholders should identify what short-term improvements could be made to the system in order to enhance its impact and effectiveness, as well as singling out those elements that would make it fit for purpose in the longer term. 2015 would be a time for global action, as the Secretary-General had noted in his synthesis report.

19. For Mozambique, 2015 would also be a year for reflection upon its future vision as it celebrated its fortieth anniversary of independence. It would be the first full year in office for its newly-elected Government and President, as well as the year in which a new national development plan would be adopted and a new UNDAF would be formulated, in conjunction with the United Nations development system, the Government, its partners, civil society, businesses and other stakeholders, based on the "Delivering as one" approach, for which Mozambique had been one of the pilot countries. The "Delivering as one" initiative had resulted in the adoption of a common budget, results and accountability framework by all the normative and operational agencies working in Mozambique, in collaboration with development partners and civil society, and its subsequent approval by the Government. Teams had been drawn together from the different United Nations entities to develop systemic policies and programmes, as well as to carry out operations and collaborative research on complex issues such as employment, social protection, gender-based violence and extractive industries. Communication policies had also been aligned.

20. As a result of investment in the "Delivering as one" initiative by the pilot countries, as well as by many self-starter countries, the approach had evolved, leading to the roll-out of standard operating procedures, while the involvement of many different countries had built a strong foundation for the United Nations to develop an integrated, multisectoral vision and the sustainable development agenda and goals. In the countries where it had been adopted, "Delivering as one" had helped to strengthen national ownership and alignment, as well as the Organization's engagement in support of national planning and budgeting systems. It

had also strengthened the normative capacity and impact of the United Nations in important areas and the Organization was now better able to measure, monitor and communicate results. The international community was therefore in a much better position to implement the post-2015 development agenda than it had been 10 years earlier; however, the mechanisms and capacities were still not sufficiently advanced, owned or applied and at current levels it would not meet the full complexity and ambition of the new agenda. The "Delivering as one" approach therefore needed to be sustained, scaled up and fully funded, in order to ensure that no one was left behind.

21. In order to further strengthen the impact of the United Nations development system in the near term and allow the "Delivering as one" approach to permeate all levels of the system, the standard operating procedures would have to be promoted at the national, regional and international levels. They would need to be monitored by means of agency systems and mutual accountability mechanisms to ensure their roll-out at the country level and the implementation of United Nations development actions. That, in turn, would require integrated financial and human resources, particularly for data capacity, policy teams, monitoring, analytics and communication. Such changes, together with common financial and budgetary frameworks, would help to reduce transaction costs. With regard to development funding, international and national funding structures should be more ambitious and should promote coherence, with a renewed commitment to pooled funding approaches such as multi-donor trust funds, thematic funds and "One United Nations" funds, which complemented core resources. Extrabudgetary financing, whether in the form of public donations, local revenue or official development assistance, should also be oriented towards instruments that promoted coherence and further strengthened the development system.

22. In order to ensure the long-term relevance and effectiveness of the United Nations development system, investment in staff and technical support was needed to provide sustained policy, analytical and communication capacity. Such resources should be integrated so that the United Nations development system could support States in their implementation of the post-2015 agenda. The network of resident coordinators could coordinate resources, but substantial investment would be needed to boost coordination capacity, establish analytical teams and strengthen national dialogue platforms to promote consultations, partnerships and ownership. Those integrating functions needed a stronger centre of gravity, so as not to be pulled apart by the centrifugal forces of the various development actors.

23. **Ms. Adams** (Global Policy Forum), panellist, said it was important to address the universality and sustainability challenges that the United Nations development system faced with regard to the sustainable development goals. There had been much discussion about the importance of issue-based platforms for implementing the post-2015 agenda and supplementing the renewed global partnership for development, but such platforms should be overtly linked to the global norms, standards and agreements adopted at the intergovernmental level. The United Nations currently had a hotchpotch of different partnerships that had contributed to fragmentation and competition within the system. In some cases, such incoherence risked undermining the Organization's convening power at the global, regional and country levels, particularly when the different approaches became disconnected from the mandate of the United Nations in how they measured effectiveness. There were many examples of such a disconnect throughout the United Nations system, often arising because the resources that Member States made available to the Organization were not commensurate with the mandates they conferred on it.

24. Lessons learned from the "Delivering as one" approach pointed to the importance of breaking down silos and contextualizing impact analysis. It was not merely a question of achieving coherence across the various partnership approaches within the United Nations system, or ensuring that business methods and operating practices were coherent. Rather, the main consideration was the Organization's mandate, which must be borne in mind when establishing partnerships with the private sector. In addition to accountability issues, private flows tended to be procyclical and had an impact on the claims made on public resources. According to the World Bank, public-private partnerships were not a panacea. The literature pointed to the negative effects on public budgets because of contingent liabilities not being adequately assessed, insufficiently reported, or accounted for off-balance sheet. Public-private partnerships were also generally considered to be more expensive than purely public financing due to higher private sector borrowing costs

and high transaction costs in general. Moreover, public-private partnerships were likely to produce inadequate risk allocation due to lack of competition during bidding and to be subject to renegotiations that might put the public sector in a weak position and subsequently lead it to accept undue risks.

25. Unsurprisingly, public-private partnerships were a topic of major concern and analysis for civil society organizations, which were committed to addressing the diversion of government resources and advocated official development assistance. They were concerned that if the weight of resources was shifted, commitments under human rights and environmental treaties could be given less consideration. The recommendation in the draft discussion paper that the United Nations development system should review its relationship with civil society was a good one. It should also be recalled that the contribution of civil society went beyond mere service provision. Civil society organizations advocated reductions in poverty and inequality, as well as the changes in production and consumption patterns that were needed to achieve development goals in a world of ecological limits. Civil society participation had to date been viewed from a multi-stakeholder point of view; however, that approach implied that all stakeholders were equal and often discouraged civil society advocates from engaging with each other and other stakeholders and passing on their expertise. Civil society could offer a different perspective on how to tackle the structural obstacles that might arise in relation to the sustainable development goals. Civil society also worked with many partners under different frameworks and could, for example, draw attention to bilateral investment treaties that were in breach of global norms and standards. Civil society organizations were therefore a natural ally of the United Nations in examining the national impact of policy incoherence.

26. United Nations activities needed a delicate balance between the pragmatism needed to achieve results and a strict adherence with global norms, standards and agreements. It appeared that the balance had tipped too far towards pragmatism. Future discussions should explore non-pragmatic approaches to resolving development issues. The United Nations was in danger of squandering the natural support and commitment that it had from citizens on many issues. Civil society wanted to address the difficult issues facing those with whom it worked at the national, regional and global levels; it was not looking for quick wins. Lastly, it should be borne in mind that no country was sustainably developed. That fact represented a tremendous challenge for the United Nations development system and should be recognized in the new agenda.

27. **Ms. Frankinet** (Observer for Belgium) said that while there was general consensus regarding the normative role of the United Nations in the context of the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals, there was less agreement on what form the Organization's operational role should take. Although the existing networks of United Nations agencies could certainly be used to implement the sustainable development agenda on the ground, the question of whether such activities should be accompanied by a financing role remained unresolved. Moreover, the role of bilateral or other development partners such as non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the agenda had not yet been discussed. Decisions must be taken on whether the United Nations should play merely a norm-setting role or whether it should take a more active operational role; it was also important to ask how States themselves wanted to implement the new sustainable development agenda. As the new agenda was universal, it also applied to the countries of the global North; however, it was currently unclear exactly what role the United Nations could play in encouraging the Governments of developed countries to implement the sustainable development goals. Such issues could be a topic for discussion at the next session of the Council's dialogue.

28. **Mr. Gumende** (Observer for Mozambique) said that the various debates, national consultations and intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda had highlighted the important role and complex responsibilities of the United Nations system in the operationalization of that agenda. While the agenda was universal, United Nations system reforms must bear in mind that it would have to address the specific needs of each country. The lessons learned from implementation of the MDGs had highlighted the importance of country leadership and ownership, together with system coherence.

29. Further clarification and fine-tuning of the role and mission of the United Nations and its various agencies in their respective areas of activity could make a significant contribution to the successful global implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. In the light of regional and national specificities and

realities, the United Nations would need to adjust its policy approaches and adopt performance models that allowed greater inclusion and acceptance of all stakeholders, in order to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of the agenda. In order to be more effective, efficient and impactful, the Organization must ensure that its approaches and operating mechanisms were fully compatible with the aspirations and needs of every region and country. From his Government's perspective, that would require the United Nations to use its position, expertise, goodwill and influence to strengthen institutional capacities globally, regionally and nationally to promote the aspirations contained in continental, regional and national development strategies for implementation of the agenda; to embrace the post-2015 development agenda as a tool to promote the establishment and improvement of regional and national development programmes, including innovative schemes for resource mobilization and wider stakeholder partnerships; and to support efforts to align the post-2015 development agenda with regional and national strategies, in order to better address regional and national development priorities and so achieve tangible results.

30. Mozambique expected the United Nations system to continue its efforts to foster and promote joint programmes and inter-agency operational activities. The "Delivering as one" approach had helped to address interrelated and complex development challenges in his country that required multisectoral responses and holistic solutions. In that connection, his delegation was grateful to the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Mozambique for the influential role she had played in spearheading the coherent institutionalization of the "Delivering as one" initiative. The United Nations system and national institutions were currently working together to formulate the new UNDAF for Mozambique, which would converge with the national five-year plan to be adopted by the new Government elected in October 2014.

31. The United Nations system should continue to mobilize political will and multidimensional support to shape the emerging agenda and implement the post-2015 development framework that Member States were in the process of negotiating.

32. **Mr. Carrera Castro** (Guatemala) said he agreed with the representative of Belgium that it was necessary to distinguish between the Organization's normative and operational roles. Recent phases of the United Nations development system had been marked by the perception that one of the system's most important roles was to build national capacity and produce results in line with the international agenda. However, the assumption that States were weak and the perception that results had to be achieved quickly to satisfy donors were somewhat problematic and avoided the main issue, which was that the international community's role was to strengthen States. It was not the responsibility of the United Nations system to achieve the MDGs or the sustainable development goals; that was the responsibility of States. It was Member States who set development agendas and who were responsible for their implementation. The agenda of the United Nations agencies was to support the work of national Governments through specific capacity-building activities. In particular, States required capacity-building support from the international community in the areas of fiscal policy; regulatory frameworks and national legislation; data management and monitoring; and the professionalization of the civil service. States' agendas were not necessarily the same as those of the United Nations system and the differences between national agendas and international mandates should therefore be clarified.

33. **Ms. Hentic** (Canada) said that her delegation was pleased that the draft discussion paper covered all of the complex issues raised by the Council, which should be addressed coherently and comprehensively in order to make the United Nations development system fit for purpose. Her delegation was optimistic about the prospects for furthering the reforms of the United Nations development system and was confident that Member States could work together to improve the relevance and impact of the Organization. In identifying the changing functions of the United Nations development system, the requirements of the least developed countries should be prioritized. A differentiated approach should also be developed to tackle socioeconomic and legal inequalities in middle-income countries. The United Nations development system should focus less on disbursement and concentrate more on its normative and advocacy work. Further discussion was also needed on how United Nations country teams could deliver integrated and strategic policy support, based on the lessons learned from the "Delivering as one" approach.

34. The structured dialogues held over the course of 2014 on the critical mass, quality, flexibility and

predictability of core and non-core funding had been very enlightening. While the discussions had not been easy, Member States had made progress on many of the concepts and identified possible long-term financing options for the United Nations development system. Those discussions should feed into consideration of the longer-term positioning of the system. Her delegation agreed with the partnership proposals made in the draft discussion paper, particularly in relation to partnerships with civil society. Public-private partnerships should also be developed in an orderly and sustainable manner, based on the principles and tools of the United Nations Global Compact.

35. Capacity and organizational reforms of the United Nations development system should be considered, bearing in mind that any changes to the development architecture would have implications for the humanitarian architecture. The two areas should therefore be considered in conjunction with each other. Moreover, it was not enough to create partnerships and synergies at the headquarters level; system-wide coordination was needed, with new models for more coordinated responses in the field. The "Delivering as one" approach should therefore be expanded and existing accountability lines extended. Member States and United Nations agencies should also make greater efforts to address the separation of humanitarian and development streams.

36. With regard to impact, the questions raised in the draft discussion paper should be reframed in the context of development outcomes. Lastly, governance of operational activities was already developed and exercised at the country level to a large extent. While more needed to be done, the country programme documents and UNDAFs were the guiding documents agreed between the United Nations and host Governments and implemented jointly. The executive boards' role was to discuss the higher-level impact of United Nations operations that were rolled up from the country level and reported in the context of strategic plans. Her delegation agreed that governance related to evidence-based policymaking required rigorous documentation and expert representation, and also that there was scope for pursuing greater governance coherence across the United Nations development system. It looked forward to further dialogue on those matters.

37. **Mr. Thomson** (Observer for Fiji), President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), said that dialogue was an inherent part of diplomatic work and he looked forward to future rounds of discussion on the essential issue under consideration. The process involved putting forward and comparing the best ideas, while maintaining an outcome-directed approach. It was not a matter of talking for the sake of it, but of seeking to get the best out of the process in order to attain the future that everyone, not just a few, wanted.

38. **Mr. Bhatti** (Observer for Pakistan) said that while the draft discussion paper had generated discussion on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system, it had missed many important elements that were of key interest to his delegation. The United Nations development system would have an important role in the post-2015 agenda, but adapting to the new transformative agenda and delivering results would be daunting tasks. It would be critical to identify capacity deficiencies and the appropriate delivery mechanisms to address them. In making the Organization fit for purpose, transparency and inclusiveness were also necessary to ensure full and effective implementation of the new development agenda, which would in particular require continued support for developing countries to address poverty and foster socioeconomic growth. The system should evolve to ensure coherence and flexibility in response to countries' specific needs, and should develop synergies with the institutions of developing countries consistent with national priorities.

39. Given that inadequate resources had been one of the factors hindering achievement of the MDGs, the United Nations development system needed to have funding commensurate with the sustainable development agenda and goals. In addition to official development assistance, broader partnerships and financing from multiple sources would be required. However, public sources of funding must be central to ensure predictability and results-oriented delivery.

40. **Mr. Dias Favero** (Brazil), referring to the normative aspect of the development system, said that his delegation had noticed a tendency to focus primarily on environmental issues and to securitize development issues, which went against what had been agreed at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). The Secretary-General regularly stated that peacekeeping and security

activities attracted the most funds and resources, while development remained the most underfunded pillar of the United Nations. It was therefore crucial to align the development system with a balanced and integrated approach to the sustainable development goals based on all three pillars. It was important to keep in mind that the eradication of hunger and poverty were the overarching objectives of the development agenda, and those same objectives should also apply to the United Nations development system as a whole, as it could not justify setting different standards for itself. The implementation of strategic frameworks for funds and programmes based on earmarked funds, without regard for national ownership, was one possible factor giving rise to an overemphasis on the environmental pillar.

41. The 2008 financial crisis had shown the importance of public policies and public intervention in the market, even in developed countries, where investment had been diverted to sustain employment and economic activity. To ensure the vital role of States within the integrated approach to sustainable development goals, capacity-building and regulatory frameworks were essential. Partnerships played a supporting role but should not be seen as the "silver bullet" solution for sustainable development. Furthermore, there was too much talk of the changing development landscape, but not enough focus on the role of South-South cooperation, which was highly cost-effective as it was dedicated to mobilizing existing resources. It was regrettable that the Council had not adopted a resolution by consensus on that important issue during the session. The United Nations development system must support developing countries to deliver policies that had already been successfully tested on the ground, especially in middle-income countries. The successful experiences of those countries had a tremendous systemic impact for the development system, since they could be adapted and replicated in other countries.

42. With regard to operational aspects, while the ongoing data revolution was vital, it was important not to fall into the trap of thinking that data was a commodity on which the private sector could place a price. Access to data must be free and Member States, especially developing countries, should further strengthen national capacity to improve their accountability and prevent the commoditization of data. In terms of the initiatives undertaken to become fit for purpose, the United Nations must avoid pre-emptive reforms that took governance away from Member States. More time and outreach was needed for those initiatives in order to build on the progress of "Delivering as one". Furthermore, it should be noted that the integrated resources and results framework had not been further discussed with Member States and had yet to be adopted.

43. **Ms. Robl** (United States of America), referring to the statement by the President of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, said that it would be interesting to explore what actors on the ground in programme countries considered to be missing. It would also be useful to invite active players outside the United Nations development system to indicate how they interacted with the system, whether they thought it was effective to address the Organization's three pillars simultaneously and what could be done differently. She would like to see further exploration of the concept of universality at the next session of the Council's dialogue, with a particular focus on how the post-2015 agenda could be implemented in countries where the development system was not present. She agreed with the representative of Brazil that reforms should not be pre-emptive; it was important to see how the United Nations development system negotiated the post-2015 development agenda before examining how it could be improved.

44. **Ms. Eckey** (Observer for Norway) said it was clear from the current discussion that a number of issues needed to be tackled. In that regard, she suggested that a thematic approach could be taken for the next session of the dialogue, providing factual overviews of some of the issues. Country-level perspectives, such as those provided by the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Mozambique, were crucial; in that regard, her delegation would welcome contributions from other such officials, particularly those working in least developed countries and fragile States. It would also be interesting to hear more about the relationship between the current dialogue and the Council's operational activities segment, and to discuss such issues as disaster risk reduction and peacebuilding as part of the current process. It would be important to explore what it meant to have a universal agenda and how the Organization should best respond to it.

45. **Mr. Do** Hung Viet (Observer for Viet Nam) said that the United Nations would undoubtedly play a central role in the implementation of the post-2015

agenda. His Government expected the Organization to support it in localizing the sustainable development goals in line with national development priorities and strategies, as it had done with the MDGs. Coherence was vital and, despite the consensus that there was no one-size-fits-all solution, several common best practices had emerged from the "Delivering as one" approach, some of which could be replicated. Among the measures implemented by Viet Nam as one of the "Delivering as one" pilot countries had been the construction of the Green One United Nations House. Upon completion, it would bring together all United Nations country teams in one location, thereby lowering costs through the pooling of services and reducing the Organization's carbon footprint.

46. The opinion expressed by country teams that greater efforts were needed at the headquarters level and in intergovernmental processes mirrored his delegation's view that the implementation of "Delivering as one" reforms at the country level had reached its limits. Competition among agencies for resources was not new, but occurred only where there was a lack of resources. Despite the existence of the One United Nations fund, funding was extremely difficult to obtain and was mostly earmarked. The United Nations, recipient countries and donor countries must work together in a tripartite partnership to ensure the success of any efforts to reposition or strengthen the role of the Organization. He welcomed the idea of increased interaction between the Council and country team representatives.

47. **Mr. Lennartsson** (Sweden) said that he would like to know whether the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Mozambique thought that the United Nations was strategically positioned to respond to the development challenges faced by that country and whether there was a collective perception in country teams that the Organization would need to reposition itself to deliver relevant and effective programmes in support of the transformative and ambitious post-2015 agenda. Was the answer more coherence and integration at country level, building on existing programmes? In view of the fact that the representative of Mozambique had highlighted the need for new policy approaches and better leveraging of United Nations resources and expertise, he wondered whether the Organization should move beyond a focus on coherence towards an emphasis on fitness for purpose and less fragmented funding. In that regard, he would like to know how country teams understood "purpose" in the concept of "fitness for purpose".

48. **Mr. Elnor** (Sudan) said that, while the dialogue had been constructive, certain issues had been overlooked. Undoubtedly, United Nations agencies should and would play a major role in delivering the post-2015 development agenda. However, the role of States in preparations for delivery of the new agenda was primordial, as they were responsible for implementing the necessary reforms and enhancing national institutions. For the agenda to be truly universal, it should be implemented first at country level and then at regional level. Drawing on the experience of Mozambique, his delegation would like to see constructive dialogue in developing States, particularly least developed countries, between United Nations agencies in the field and national ministers. The results of such dialogue should be reported to the Council, as they would be useful in defining future options for cooperation between the United Nations system and States. There were also opportunities for regional, bilateral, North-South and South-South cooperation, in which the United Nations could play an important role in coordinating institution-building, capacity-building and technology transfer. Member States wanted coordination and internal reform of the United Nations to ensure that, in implementing the new agenda, it was prepared for the necessary action in the field.

49. **Mr. Wennubst** (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation) said that, if serious consideration was given to building sustainability into the agenda, the long-term implications would be seen at the normative and regulatory levels. The United Nations was the only institution with the legitimacy to support countries in defining their national regulatory systems in a changing world, through a combination of normative and operational mechanisms. In order to do so, evidence-based research, open data access, and information on what worked were required; providing those elements could well be a key aspect of the Organization's system-wide mandate. His Government was currently considering how sustainability would influence its own regulatory system and what actions it would need to take in the light of evidence-based information. All partners must work together to determine the future mandate of the United Nations system.

50. **Ms. Topping** (United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Mozambique) said that country leadership and national

ownership were integral to the modus operandi of the United Nations development system. The Organization's mandate was to support national Governments and their strategies; that was vital for its legitimacy on the ground. More work was needed in the area of reforms at the field level. While much had been accomplished through the "Delivering as one" approach and standard operating procedures, it could not yet be said that the Organization was fit for purpose. However, marked progress had been achieved in the 20 years since the first introduction of UNDAFs.

51. Given the ambitions of the post-2015 agenda and the need to truly understand and monitor equity and sustainability in order to ensure that no one was left behind, implementation of the new agenda was a major undertaking and would require time as well as a major increase in capacity. While good national data systems existed, analytics and disaggregated data at the grassroots level would be needed to determine which areas should be targeted in each country and what was holding back the achievement of social development goals. Significant investment was therefore vital in order for the United Nations development system to become fit for purpose — its "purpose" in that regard being to close the gaps preventing full realization of development, human rights and other aspects of the Organization's agenda. It must also be borne in mind that the areas requiring investment were nationally driven; the future relevance of the United Nations in Mozambique, for example, would depend on the new country-level vision led by the Government. The role of the United Nations at the country level should also be linked with the regional agenda.

52. **Ms. Adams** (Global Policy Forum), replying to the representative of Canada, said that the recommendation in the draft discussion paper to have a more systemic dialogue and partnership with civil society stemmed, in part, from the fact that such recommendations had been missing during the many United Nations reform initiatives undertaken since the 1990s. The Organization's infrastructure for engaging with civil society was significantly weaker than that for other areas of engagement. Civil society organizations were at a disadvantage because they were not structured according to the institutions of the United Nations system, but according to themes and constituencies. Until there was more consistent linkage between the normative and the operational roles of the United Nations, its participation and engagement with civil society was likely to remain uneven. Such engagement currently reflected the humanitarian service provision and campaigning activities of civil society organizations, while the Organization did not really benefit from their other areas of expertise, which cut across different policy arenas and did not focus solely on the United Nations development system and its structure. Civil society also offered considerable expertise at the national or country level.

Briefing on the work of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination

53. **Mr. Kim** Won-soo (Secretary of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB)) said that the second CEB regular session, held in November 2014, had been hosted by the World Bank Group, which indicated the increasing partnership between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions. It had taken place against the backdrop of challenging times for the international multilateral system as it dealt with the Ebola crisis in West Africa, conflicts in the Middle East, Central Africa and Ukraine, and the worsening climate crisis, as well as sluggish economic recovery and high youth unemployment.

54. With the MDG deadline fast approaching, the Board had continued engaging at the highest level to mobilize the United Nations system to accelerate the implementation of the Goals in countries that had faced delays and challenges in the last two years. The Board had now reviewed MDG implementation in 14 countries, identifying bottlenecks and system-wide solutions. In its latest review, held at its November 2014 regular session, it had focused on the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Pakistan and Yemen. The agreed actions to be taken by the United Nations system in the Lao People's Democratic Republic included fully supporting the Government's new, multisectoral food and nutrition security action plan and scaling up interventions on nutrition to the national level. In Pakistan, the Board had agreed, inter alia, to continue to advocate for girls' education and initiate an integrated child welfare development programme in lagging districts, while in Yemen, with a view to improving rural livelihoods in fragile and conflict situations and employment for women and youth, it had agreed, among other measures, to develop strategies and coordinated action plans for systemic inclusion of women, youth and other marginalized groups in

political and developmental processes. At each review session, the Board also considered the progress achieved in previously reviewed countries.

55. The MDG review process had clearly shown that significant development gains were possible when United Nations agencies came together in support of goal acceleration and national programmes of action. Two more review sessions were planned for 2015 and executive heads would then discuss lessons learned and take a decision on using a similar process to support the implementation of the sustainable development goals. With regard to key coordination efforts by the Board in the areas of operational activities, management and administration, the roll-out of the UNDG standard operating procedures and Plan of Action for Headquarters was well under way. Other important management initiatives to enhance the system's ability to function included organizational resilience and a reference risk management, oversight and accountability model.

56. At the session, the Board had also discussed a range of challenges of system-wide concern. It had exchanged views on regional issues, including those related to peace and security, and their impacts on development; the humanitarian agenda; and the outlook for the world economic situation and its implications for the work of member organizations. A particular focus had been placed on the response to the Ebola crisis in West Africa, in respect of which the Board had expressed its strong collective commitment to ensuring a coordinated system-wide response and to delivering as one, and climate change had also remained high on the agenda. The Board had considered youth employment and urbanization, two issues of great concern to Member States and CEB member organizations; it had also issued joint statements in support of the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action.

57. The Board was increasingly engaged in supporting Member States in formulating the post-2015 development agenda. At the session, CEB members had identified a number of related issues, including the effective functioning of the United Nations system, stronger multi-stakeholder engagement, integration of policies and strategies with an emphasis on normative capacities, capacity-building, greater accountability, and retaining and attracting talent for the Organization's workforce. Some of the views expressed had been reflected in the Secretary-General's synthesis report (A/69/700), which had been intended to start a process of reflection and deliberations. Member States' agreement on the substance of the post-2015 agenda would provide an important guide for the Organization's work. As consultations advanced, it was becoming clear that the sustainable development agenda must be supported by an effective monitoring and review framework, which required quality data. The Board had agreed that reliable, timely, disaggregated and accessible data was essential for supporting national efforts. Consequently, the High-level Committee on Management, the High-level Committee on Programmes and UNDG had been tasked with developing a coherent programme of work focused on ways to strengthen the United Nations system's capacity in the area of data. The Board remained committed to enhancing system-wide coherence and coordination on programme, operational and management matters. Ultimately, the United Nations would be judged on its delivery of tangible results for countries and their people and the Board was proud to contribute to that effort.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.